



The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Who Use a Service Animal and *Travel by Taxi*

The Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy (VOPA) is providing this information about your legal duty to provide taxi service to persons with disabilities who use service animals.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) says that a service animal is any animal individually trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability. Many people are familiar with “seeing eye dogs” that help persons who are blind. However, service animals perform many functions for persons with other disabilities including, persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, persons who use wheelchairs or have other mobility impairments, and persons with mental illness or emotional disorders.

State and federal laws protect persons with disabilities who use service animals. In Virginia, persons who use service animals have the legal right to public and private transportation. In other words, you cannot deny a ride to a person with a disability just because he or she uses a service animal. State law says that you can have your license to operate a taxi cab company revoked or be charged with a crime for interfering with a person’s right to use a service animal.

A service animal should be considered an extension of the person using it. Therefore, you cannot charge a higher fare or fees to persons with disabilities who use service animals.

If you need further information, please feel free to contact us.

Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy

1910 Byrd Avenue, Suite 5
Richmond, Virginia 23230
800-552-3962 (Toll-Free in Virginia) (Voice and TTY)
804-225-2042 (Voice and TTY)
Fax: 804-662-7057
E-Mail: general.vopa@vopa.virginia.gov
Web: www.vopa.state.va.us

This publication was prepared with 100% federal funding under the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights Program under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, Title V, Sec. 509, 29 U.S.C. 794(e).and is based on the law at the time it was written.

VOPA publications are available in alternate format, upon request.